Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Previously Presented) A method of preventing blockages of flow paths of a separator, the separator being set to achieve a desired fat content during processing of a fat-containing product such as milk, the method steps comprising:

determining a concentration of the fat content of an outflowing product phase from the separator to detect an imminent clogging;

shifting a separation zone in a separator drum of the separator for a defined minimum time period by changing operating parameters when a defined fat content limit value, which is greater than the desired fat content, is one of reached and exceeded to prevent blockages of flow paths of the separator; and

after the defined minimum time period is reached, the separator is returned to the desired fat content setting.

2. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 1, wherein the fat-containing product is cold milk and the cold milk is separated into cream and skimmed milk.

3. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 2, wherein the cold milk has a temperature of 2-15°C and is separated into cream having a fat content of 28-45% and into skimmed milk.

4. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 1, wherein the separation zone in the drum is shifted toward an interior of the drum when the fat content limit value has been one of reached and exceeded.

5. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 1, wherein the determining of the concentration of the fat content takes place by a mass flow meter.

6. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 5, wherein the mass flow meter has a separate density output.

7. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 1, wherein the separation zone in the drum is shifted toward an interior of the drum by a throttling of a valve in a skimmed milk outlet.

8. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 7, wherein the throttling of the valve in the skimmed milk outlet takes place by a timer for a defined time period.

9. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 1, wherein the separation zone is shifted by an increase of an inflow rate.

10. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 9, wherein the inflow rate is increased within a time period of from 5-60 seconds.

11. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 9, wherein the inflow rate is increased within a time period of from 5-20 seconds.

12. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 9, wherein the inflow rate is increased by 5-40%.

13. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 9, wherein the inflow rate is increased by 5-20%.

14-20. (Cancelled)

21. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 2, wherein the cold milk has a temperature of 4°-10°C and is separated into cream having a fat content of 28-45% and into skimmed milk.